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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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Lauchhammer Coking Plant.

1. In order to avoid having to import coke made from hard coal, a battery of 20 coking ovens was erected in Lauchhammer to manufacture coke from lignite. It was intended to use the lignite coke in the neighboring iron and steel works.

2. After testing the first batch of coke, it was discovered that the lignite coke was not suitable for undiluted use in blast furnaces. It had too small a grain, and was not sufficiently porous. It had, therefore, to be mixed in the approximate proportions of 30% lignite coke to 70% hard-coal coke for introduction into the furnaces.

3. As a result, 15 of the 20 coking ovens already in operation became redundant, and for the past half year, only five have been in production. It is intended to concentrate future production on five ovens only.

Beuna Lignite-Drying Plant.

4. During 1951-1952, tests took place with dried lignite to see if this substance could be used to replace "briquets" as a fuel. Tests were favorable, and in August 1953, the lignite-drying plant Beuna, with a potential daily production of 600 metric tons was opened. This plant reduces the water content of lignite from 60% to 30%. So far, only test quantities of dried lignite have been produced; the plant is not working anywhere near capacity.

5. The good points of dried lignite as a fuel are as follows:

   a. It is easily ignited and has good burning qualities.

   b. It leaves little ash and no clinker.

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(Note: Washington Distribution)

The disadvantages are:

a. It is too powdery, which makes normal transportation methods impossible.

b. It is unsuitable for long term storage as it ignites itself after about four to six weeks in open air, not in the center of the heap, but at the edges.

6. Tests are still going on involving a mixture of lignite-powder, air, and other gases, to introduce them into a furnace in the correct proportions for burning, since no other satisfactory system has yet been developed to feed dried lignite into a furnace, other than blowing it in.

7. In mid-October 1953, a party of electrical engineers was invited to visit the experimental establishment in Beuna to consider ways of using dried lignite as a power station fuel, and to design boilers for this purpose.